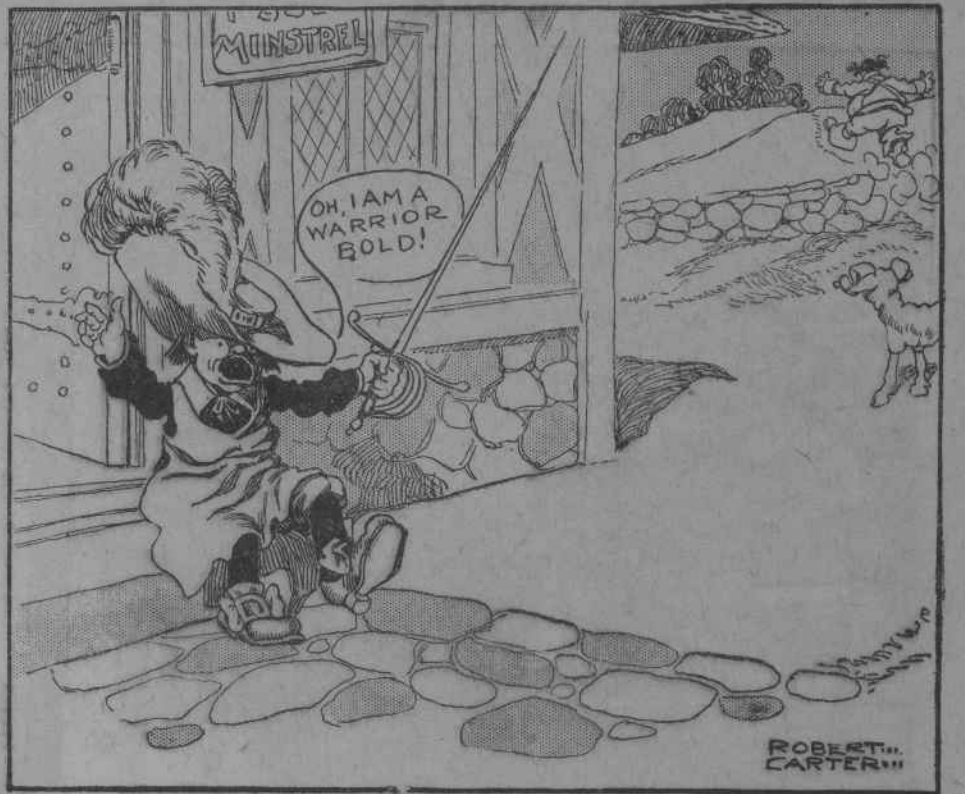


YE WARRIOR BOLD AND YE SMALL VARLET



HYSON TEA CLUB: By Horace Seymour Keller

Wherein the Beverage Is Seasoned with Brimstone.

The Ideal Girl.

THE quilling was over, the frames had been carried to the attic, and the doors barred against all members of the male sex. The Hysons were about to hold one of their sessions, with one seat reserved for an expected member. Penelope Pugglesley had elected herself years ago president, resident and visiting delegate of the Committee of Dissemination of Current Events. She was also secretary, treasurer and main mogul, chief cook and bottle washer, and about everything else in sight in the line of official holdings. Penelope had not reached her present high altitude without struggling for it against much opposition, but she possessed a wedge shaped face, with a hatchet chin and chisel nose; her hair was drawn down over her forehead and her head was conical—that is, went up straight from the nape of the neck and ended at the bump of self-esteem, upon which bristled a few iron gray hairs, kept in place by a great horn comb.

The fragrant aroma of tea filled the air, and the members of the club, with spoons balanced, were ready for the onslaught, as is the war horse when it smells burnt powder.

"Slip! Slip! Slip!"

"Miss Horribles, did you see how that Snow girl kept close to the minister last night after the prayer meeting?"

The Hysons are off!

Rough riding over ploughed fields, snag tooth, stump fence and rocky roads is not in the race when the Hysons gallop iron shod to the field of paragon. Every eye is a gleam with the frenzy of scandal, every nostril is a quiver with the nervous dilatation of the spell of gossip, and every fist is clenched, more hard, more firm, more potent for pain infliction than any mailed fist could possibly be.

"Yes, and it was perfectly scandalous. Why, I never even got a chance to congratulate the dear little man for filling my soul with divine emotions."

"Slip! Slip! Slip!"

This time the echo of war fell from two pairs of lips as two pairs of eyes peered piercingly at the speaker, who was gazing into her cup, vigorously working her spoon, and wrapped in meditateness. Ah! the lightninglike glances that shot from the two pairs of eyes were more basilisk than the glare of the reptilian monster of the Gila.

"And I was so anxious to impress upon the dear little man's mind the wonderful power his exquisite words had over my heart." Penelope moistened her spoon.

Two tongues moistened two pairs of lips; no venomous adder ever thrust forth its forked tongue more rapidly.

"Miss Pugglesley, what do you suppose is going on at the Browns?" The curtains have not been lifted to-day.

This from the member of the Hysons who had not spoken before brought forth fresh fruit for plucking, new fuel for burning. Penelope Pugglesley dropped her spoon to the saucer with a clatter as she lifted her hands in horror; a glow of triumph passed over her wedge shaped face and she smiled an ugly smile. Her eyes glittered with hidden fires that burned in her bosom; her breath came in quick, short gasps as she tried to give utterance to the pent emotions that made her thrill and quiver from head to foot. Finally, with a supreme effort, she opened her lips and did not speak at all! She only fixed her eyes upon her cup and stirred, stirred, stirred, as she nodded and wagged her conical head wickedly. Her actions were more forcible than words. At last some exclamationary tragedy of life has fallen upon the Browns—and Penelope is not sorry. They had ever been averse to her company, and had failed to treat her with the respect due one of her high attainments (principally as disseminator of current events and foment of troublesome gossip). The silence is broken and she lifts her wedge shaped face and says:

"I always knew that trouble would come in the end to Elinda Brown and her family. She has always looked over us and held her proud head high in the air. I am so sorry."

"So am I."

"And I, too."

Three faces bent over the cups which had been filled up by the leader. Not a word was said while the Hysons sipped and sipped. When they lifted their eyes the chair reserved for the belated one was occupied.

A pair of dark and dazzlingly penetrating eyes roved from face to face as a soft, soothing, suave voice uttered:

"Pardon me for this intrusion, ladies; please do not let me disturb you. I was passing by and the fragrance of your tea greeted my nostrils; I was thirsty, and I could not resist the temptation to drop in and join you in a cup."

"A man!"

"It can't be!"

"Girls, it is a man!"

This last, very forcibly from the leader, convinced the others that it was true—a real man had finally joined the sacred circle, and uninvited at that!

"Ladies," said the stranger beaming affably from right to left, "I am sorry for once that I am but a common man; however, if that disturbs you I can easily arrange the disagreeable matter." The speaker waved his slender olive hued hands over the table.

A tiny speck of some powdery substance fell into each cup, and a dense, mistlike veil arose between the Hysons and the stranger guest. When the astonished as well as startled members recovered their composure, lo and behold! instead of a man a beautiful young woman occupied the chair. The witching fair one said in sweet tones:

"Do not be frightened, dear ladies; I have not had an opportunity before for ever so long to join your dear circle. I am so glad that we are all here at last. A cup of tea, dear Penelope."

Penelope thought the stranger was somewhat familiar and gave her a sudden look of inquiry. The other smiled and said:

"Pardon me the familiarity, dear Penelope, but we have been close friends for so long, you know. This tea is perfectly exquisite; you are a perfect tea brewer, dear. Another cup, please."

The prettily rounded wrist and slender hand were a-glimmer with diamonds as they were extended across the table. Penelope rubbed her eyes, as did the other astonished members. The leader of the Hysons was at a loss for words. As for the others, they were dumb and could only gaze at the beautiful creature who seemed so perfectly at home in the circle.

Penelope aroused herself from the lethargy that seemed to hold every fibre of her being and finally uttered:

"If you have known me for so long, why have you not favored me with the pleasure of your company, Miss —?"

"Mrs., if you please. One who is many thousands of years old should be always addressed as Mrs. Now, I will tell you all something. If you will listen." Curiosity bent them close to the fair speaker, who remarked softly:

"The minister is engaged to the Snow girl. The reason why the curtains at the Brown home have not been moved to-day is because the folks all went away to the mountains last night. Awful, isn't it?"

"Slip! Slip! Slip!"

"Well, I must be going, ladies. I have had a delightful time, and I hope to meet you all again."

"But please leave us your card before you go."

"Certainly; here it is, but kindly do not look at it until I go. Farewell, I go!"

The pretty lady vanished as mysteriously as she came. The Hysons rubbed their eyes as they gazed from one to the other. But there was the card upon the table before them. Penelope touched it and quickly withdrew her hand and said:

"Hot as a coal!"

She flipped it over with a spoon. Printed upon the card was the following, in blood-red letters:

"His Satanic Majesty."
"I knew I smelled brimstone."
"And I, too."

But Penelope said not a word. She only gazed into her cup and sniffed her fears to the wind as she stirred, stirred, stirred.

Perplexity in Pants.



Tailor Bird—That's the way it is when you have a family of boys. Every one of them is crying for the first pair of breeches I've made.

The Pink of Perfection.



THE UNLUCKY CORDIAL: By William J. Lampton

With Profuse Apologies to James Lane Allen.

HAVE forgotten Nature. Blue Grass Kentucky is so chuck full of art. July, now nearly gone, has passed—softed sweetness and ablaze with light. Time has swept on, the world has run round, but I have stood motionless, abiding the hour of my marriage as a tree the season of its leaves. I don't suppose I could have done otherwise, a bridegroom having so very little to say about his wedding.

However, after the ceremony I hope to be somebody and have some voice in the family. When Georgiana confessed her love I had supposed the confession to mark the end of her elusiveness. When, later, she presented to me the symbol of a heart pierced with needles I had taken it for granted that henceforth she would settle down into something like a state of domestication, growing less like a swift and more like a hen. But a man makes a mistake when he takes anything for granted if a woman has hold of the other end of it. Georgiana is no hen. I have been called an old rooster, but that doesn't affect Georgiana's status in any way to be. I look upon her as a woman, not of her. The privilege was merely given to plant my flag-staff on the uncertain edge of an unknown land, and if she wants to haul down my flag at any time she does it, and I don't dare to shoot her on the spot. Of course, as a Kentuckian, I carry a gun, but of what use is it at such a moment as this?

Georgiana does not play the piano, or, as Mrs. Winters would say, she does not perform upon the instrument. Her sister Sylvia does. Thank heaven, I am not to marry Sylvia! Love has its limitations. Nor does Georgiana sing to company in the parlor. That is also a comfort—not only to me, but to the company. But Georgiana I have never known to sing except when sewing and alone, as the way of women often is. She was not aware that I heard her, or I am sure she would not have sung. She knows I have a sensitive ear, and she is very kind.

One morning not long ago, with a sort of pitiful gravity, her sister ran in the way of saying how we should gather our rosebuds as we may. The warning could not have been addressed to me. I shall gather mine while I may—the unfurled rose of Georgiana's life, heart and spirit. "No bouquets" is not my watchword.

Naturally she and I have avoided the subject of the Cardinal, but to the tragedy of his death was joined one circumstance of such course and brutal unconcern that it had left me not only remorseful but resentful. As we sat together the other evening, after one of those mint juleps that so often come between us, I could no longer forbear to face an understanding.

"Georgiana," I said, "do you know what became of the redbird?"

Unwittingly the color of reproach must have lain upon my words, for she answered quickly, with yet more in hers—

"I had it buried."

It was my turn to be surprised. I had seen evidence to the contrary. A woman will not tell a fib when she knows she will be caught in it.

"Are you sure?" I inquired.

"I am sure that I am sure. I told them where to bury it. I showed them the very spot—under the cedar. They told me they had. Why?"

I thought it better that she should learn the truth.

"You know we can't trust negroes. They disobeyed you. They lied to you. They never buried it. They threw it on the ash pile. The pigs tore it to pieces. I saw them. They were rooting at it and tearing it to pieces."

"Oh, the rooters!" she cried.

She had clasped her hands and turned toward me in acute distress. After a while, with her face aside, she said slowly:

"And you have believed that I knew of this—that I permitted it?"

"I have believed nothing. I have waited to understand."

A few minutes later she said, as if to herself:—

"Many a person would have been only too glad to believe it and to blame me."

Then folding her hands over one of mine, she said, with tears in her eyes:—

"Promise me—oh, promise me, Adam, until we are married, and—yes, after we are mar-

ried—as long as I live, that you will never believe anything of me until you know it is true."

"I do promise, dear, dear, dearest one," I cried, trying to draw her to me, but she would not permit it. Georgiana is almost perversity about some things. "And you?" I murmured.

"I shall never misunderstand," she replied, as with a flash of inward light. "I know that you can never do anything that will make me think less of you."

I did not respond, but deep in my heart I saw graven in golden letters what every husband should have emblazoned there:—

"And if I do, dear, you bet I'll never let you know a thing about it. Not on your blessed tiptoe!"

An Idyll of a Summer Sunset

A commonplace young girl;
A decidedly rare young girl;
Stay-at-home-night
Do-what-I-wish-right
Help-her-old-mother young girl.

A hard-to-find young girl;
A reader-of-facts young girl;
An extra-poetical,
Anti-aesthetic,
Care-nothing-for-novels young girl.

A minus-her-rouge young girl;
A show-all-her-brains young girl,
With an unpowdered face,
One that can rub,
A dress-for-her-health young girl.

An up-in-the-morning young girl;
A help-with-the-work young girl;
One that can rub,
Not afraid of the tub,
A roll-up-her-sleeves young girl.

A quiet and modest young girl;
A sweet and pure young girl;
An upright, ambitious,
Lovely, delicious,
A pride-of-the-home young girl.

A remarkably scarce young girl;
A very-much-wanted young girl;
A truly American,
Too-utterly paragon,
The kind-that-I-like young girl.

WILL M. CLEMENS

The Other Kind.

"Young Lawyer Cheatum put in a bill for \$3,000 for settling old man Moneybags' estate."

"Why, I thought he said it was a labor for love."

"He was planning to marry the widow then. When she eloped with young Skylark he explained that his labor was for love-of money."

Doctored Sugar.

"I see now a doctor is claiming that we ought to eat a certain amount of sand."

"I'll bet he's in with my grocer."

Adjustable.

Reporter—At times I find that I must carry my conscience with my heart in my sleeve.

Reader—You take off your coat when you write, don't you?

Nemesis.

"It's strange about Hynes. He married to get away from a boarding house."

"And what of that?"

"Well, now his wife has to run one in order to keep the family."

No Reason.

Husband—Why do you refuse to go with me to the opera?

Wife—Because I have no gown.

Husband—That's no reason. You'll see others there with even less on.